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Food and Nutrition Education and Information Resources

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Cataloging Prep



It is a policy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to promote optimal human health and well-being through improved nutrition. In support of this, the USDA conducts research in human nutrition and food science; provides food and nutrition education, information, and guidance; assesses the nutritional adequacy of domestic food supplies; and monitors food use and consumption patterns.

Two important assumptions underlie Government's role in nutrition education. First, dietary habits are important to the health and productivity of the population. Second, basic decisions about lifestyles and eating habits must be left to the individual consumer. Thus, it is widely accepted that Government does have a responsibility to make available reliable information in ways that will help consumers make informed choices about their diet.

Office of Information

Provides liaison between USDA and mass communication media and the public at large. Directs and coordinates public affairs information work with various agencies including those with responsibility for nutrition and nutrition-related information. Maintains an electronic data base that contains consumer-oriented information on nutrition, foods, and food economics, and food safety.

Contact: Office of Information, OGPA
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Room 402A—ADMBG
Washington, DC 20250
(202) 447-5881

Agricultural Marketing Service

Provides information about quality food grade standards for individuals and institutional food buyers.

Agricultural Research Service

Researches and publishes studies about nutrient requirements, nutrient content of agricultural commodities and processed foods, factors which influence nutritional status, and integration of human nutritional needs into the agricultural food system.

Economic Research Service

Researches and publishes reports on a variety of food-related issues, including food consumption, food safety, domestic food programs, food expenditures, and emerging food technologies.

Extension Service

Provides educational programs that use research-based knowledge in nutrition, food science, and food safety principles. Programs are offered at the local level in over 3,000 counties nationwide. Emphasis is on teaching clientele decision making and resource management skills that will help them improve their nutritional practices.

Food and Nutrition Service

Administers the USDA food assistance programs. To help the persons who operate these programs at the local level, the Agency provides technical support in the areas of nutrition science, nutrition education, and food science. An example is the development of resource materials for planning menus that need specified nutritional guidelines for the National School Lunch Program and for the nutrition education component of the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

Food Safety and Inspection Service

As the public health agency in USDA, the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) assures that meat and poultry products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. FSIS runs a toll-free hotline to answer consumer questions about food safety. The number is 800-535-4555; in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, 447-3333.

Human Nutrition and Information Service

Conducts research and provides information for professionals and consumers on the nutritive value of foods; food and nutrient consumption and related factors; food selection; preparation and storage; food money management; food guides; nutrition education concepts; and dietary guidelines for health promotion.

National Agricultural Library

Maintains a Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) that contains a 41,000-volume collection on all aspects of food and nutrition. FNIC is a repository for nutrition education and school food service materials and a national demonstration center for food and nutrition microcomputer software.

For more information about any of the agencies listed, contact the USDA Office of Information. For publications, contact the following: Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, CO 81009; Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402-9325; or your local county Extension office listed in the white pages of the phone directory under county government.

Join the Food and Fitness Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, in cooperation with private industry, State and county Cooperative Extension Services, and other State and county, community, and consumer groups, can sponsor a variety of food and fitness activities such as: exhibits, educational projects, workshops, fairs, and physical fitness sports events that promote food and fitness.

The goals of the Food and Fitness Program are:

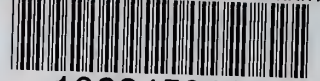
- to demonstrate the vitality of the American agricultural system as evidenced in its ability to provide the world's most varied, abundant, and nutritious food supply;
- to stress the importance of good nutrition throughout life;
- to emphasize the critical relationship between diet and regular exercise in maintaining total health and physical fitness; and
- to promote the best use of natural, economic, and human resources to assure continuance of the American food system and the furtherance of good health practices by Americans.

For additional information on food and fitness activities in your community, contact your local Cooperative Extension office listed in the phone directory under county government, or the Food and Fitness Office, Home Economics and Human Nutrition, Extension Service, USDA, Room 3438-So. Bldg., Washington, DC 20250-0900, (202) 447-8855.

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NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LIBRARY



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The United States Department of Agriculture offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, age, handicap, sex or national origin, and is an equal opportunity employer.